

# POLICY STATEMENT

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## Strengthened Commitment to Buy Local

It is a top priority of the CLP to ensure that local business are able to tender for, and win, government construction, procurement and services contracts. More work performed by local companies means that more money stays, and is spent, in the local economy.

In late 2015, the CLP Government introduced a Buy Local Plan to support local business. The Buy Local Plan was part of a larger initiative to ensure that Territory businesses were given priority in the government tendering process.

A major part of the CLP Buy Local Plan was the creation of the Local Benefit Advisory Panel. The LPAB was made up of 20 independent stakeholder representatives from across industries and geographical locations in the Territory and was tasked with reviewing all tenders with a value of \$5 million or more to ensure compliance with local content and local benefit requirements.

The Labor Government disbanded the LBAP in 2017, replacing it with the Procurement Review Board (PRB). Unlike the LBAP, half of the 10 members of the PRB are government representatives. The PRB reforms included the creation of the Buy Local Industry Advocate position, intended to be an independent link between local business and the Territory Government.

The intention behind the creation of the position of Buy Local Advocate is supported; however, consistent feedback around the BLA's lack of statutory power is a weakness in the policy objective. For example, as of the Advocate's second annual report, the Gunner Government had yet to respond to concerns identified in the previous annual report.

### **Recommitment to Buy Local in the Territory**

In order to accelerate improvements in Buy Local policy, a CLP Government will double down on Buy Local by:

- Increasing the power of the Buy Local Advocate to influence changes in government procurement policy by creating the independent statutory office of the Buy Local Advocate;
- Legislating the power of the Buy Local Advocate to require the responsible Minister to either: (a) accept recommendations made by the Advocate; or (b) table a response to recommendations made by the Advocate in Parliament within three sitting days of receiving the report explaining why recommendations will not be accepted;
- Standardising the criteria for determining 'local content' to provide a more objective framework across government procurement activities while retaining the 30 per cent weighting;
- Reinstating the Local Benefit Advisory Panel to review tenders of greater than \$5 million and advise the Buy Local Advocate any irregularities or matters that should be investigated in order to ensure that local content requirements are being met and that tender processes are transparent, fair and accountable for all stakeholders; and
- Retain the current Procurement Review Board to serve as the primary policy development body and appeals panel.